

vessel owner that is a party to the voluntary cooperative; the vessel name, FFP number, and LLP license number for each vessel managed under the cooperative; and the target species, processing mode, gear types, and management area(s) associated with the voluntary cooperative's federal fishing operations. If an applicant submits a copy of the voluntary fishing cooperative contract but it does not contain this information, the applicant also must submit a written affidavit that provides all of the information required in this paragraph (e)(3)(i)(B) that is not included in the cooperative contract.

(ii) *Application submission.* The application for use of non-CDQ harvest regulations must be submitted to the Regional Administrator per the instructions on the application form.

(iii) *Submittal and duration—(A) Submittal.* An application requesting approval for the use of non-CDQ harvest regulations may be submitted to NMFS at any time.

(B) *Duration.* Once approved, an application to use alternative CDQ harvest regulations is effective as of the date on which NMFS approves the application. The approval is effective until the requesting entity withdraws its application, or until there is a change in the membership of the voluntary cooperative, whichever occurs first.

(iv) *NMFS review.* NMFS will review an application to use non-CDQ harvest regulations to determine that all of the information submitted complies with the requirements of paragraphs (e)(2) and (3) of this section, and that the vessels listed on the application form represent a majority of the vessels participating in the applicable sector. If NMFS determines that the application is deficient, NMFS will notify the applicant in writing to identify the discrepancies and provide the applicant with an opportunity to correct them.

(v) *NMFS determinations and administrative appeal.* NMFS will approve an application to use non-CDQ harvest regulations when it determines that all of the information submitted with the application complies with the requirements of paragraphs (e)(2) and (3) of this section, the vessels listed on the

application form represent a majority of vessels participating in an applicable sector, and the CDQ harvest regulations are more restrictive than the non-CDQ regulations for the applicable sector. NMFS will issue an initial administrative determination (IAD) disapproving the application and the reasons for its disapproval if the application is incomplete, the voluntary cooperative does not represent a majority of the vessels participating in the sector, or the CDQ harvest regulations are not more restrictive than the non-CDQ regulations for the applicable sector. An applicant who receives an IAD disapproving an application may appeal under the procedures set forth at § 679.43.

(vi) *Amendments.* The entity applied for use of non-CDQ harvest regulations must promptly notify NMFS of any changes in the voluntary fishing cooperative's membership by re-applying in accordance with this paragraph (e). Amendments to an approved application to use alternative CDQ harvest regulations may be submitted to NMFS at any time, and will be reviewed under the requirements of this paragraph (e).

[77 FR 6499, Feb. 8, 2012, as amended at 77 FR 59060, Sept. 26, 2012; 77 FR 70091, Nov. 21, 2012]

Subpart D—Individual Fishing Quota Management Measures

§ 679.40 Sablefish and halibut QS.

The Regional Administrator shall annually divide the TAC of halibut and sablefish that is apportioned to the fixed gear fishery pursuant to the annual management measures published in the FEDERAL REGISTER pursuant to § 300.62 of chapter III of this title and § 679.20, minus the CDQ reserve, among qualified halibut and sablefish quota share holders, respectively.

(a) *Initial allocation of QS—(1) General.* The Regional Administrator shall initially assign to qualified persons, on or after October 18, 1994, halibut and sablefish fixed gear fishery QS that are specific to IFQ regulatory areas and vessel categories. QS will be assigned as a block in the appropriate IFQ regulatory area and vessel category, if that QS would have resulted in an allocation of less than 20,000 lb (9 mt) of IFQ

Fishery Conservation and Management

§ 679.40

for halibut or sablefish based on the 1994 TAC for fixed gear in those fisheries for specific IFQ regulatory areas and the QS pools of those fisheries for specific IFQ regulatory areas as of October 17, 1994.

(2) *Qualified person.* (i) As used in this section, a “qualified person” means a “person,” as defined in § 679.2:

(A) That owned a vessel that made legal landings of halibut or sablefish, harvested with fixed gear, from any IFQ regulatory area in any QS qualifying year; or

(B) That leased a vessel that made legal landings of halibut or sablefish, harvested with fixed gear, from any IFQ regulatory area in any QS qualifying year. A person who owns a vessel cannot be a qualified person based on the legal fixed gear landings of halibut or sablefish made by a person who leased the vessel for the duration of the lease.

(C) Who is a citizen of the United States at the time of application for QS.

(D) Who is a corporation, partnership, association, or other non-individual entity that would have qualified to document a fishing vessel as a vessel of the United States during the QS qualifying years of 1988, 1989, and 1990.

(ii) Qualified persons, or their successors-in-interest, must exist at the time of their application for QS.

(iii) A former partner of a dissolved partnership or a former shareholder of a dissolved corporation who would otherwise qualify as a person may apply for QS in proportion to his or her interest in the dissolved partnership or corporation.

(iv) Sablefish harvested within Prince William Sound, or under a State of Alaska limited entry program, will not be considered in determining whether a person is a qualified person.

(3) *Qualification for QS—(i) Year.* A QS qualifying year is 1988, 1989, or 1990.

(ii) *Vessel ownership.* Evidence of vessel ownership shall be limited to the following documents, in order of priority:

(A) For vessels required to be documented under the laws of the United States, the USCG abstract of title issued in respect of that vessel.

(B) A certificate of registration that is determinative as to vessel ownership.

(C) A bill of sale.

(iii) *Vessel lease.* Conclusive evidence of a vessel lease will include a written vessel lease agreement or a notarized statement from the vessel owner and lease holder attesting to the existence of a vessel lease agreement at any time during the QS qualifying years. Conclusive evidence of a vessel lease must identify the leased vessel and indicate the name of the lease holder and the period of time during which the lease was in effect. Other evidence, which may not be conclusive, but may tend to support a vessel lease, may also be submitted.

(iv) *Ownership interest.* Evidence of ownership interest in a dissolved partnership or corporation shall be limited to corporate documents (e.g., articles of incorporation) or notarized statements signed by each former partner, shareholder or director, and specifying their proportions of interest.

(v) *Legal landing of halibut or sablefish—(A) Definition.* As used in this section, a “legal landing of halibut or sablefish” means halibut or sablefish harvested with fixed gear and landed in compliance with state and Federal regulations in effect at the time of the landing.

(B) *Documentation.* Evidence of legal landings shall be limited to documentation of state or Federal catch reports that indicate the amount of halibut or sablefish harvested, the IPHC regulatory area or groundfish reporting area in which it was caught, the vessel and gear type used to catch it, and the date of harvesting, landing, or reporting. State catch reports are Alaska, Washington, Oregon, or California fish tickets. Federal catch reports are production reports required under § 679.5. Sablefish harvested within Prince William Sound or under a State of Alaska limited entry program will not be considered in determining qualification to receive QS, nor in calculating initial QS.

(4) *Calculation of initial QS—(i) Halibut QS.* The Regional Administrator shall calculate the halibut QS for any qualified person in each IFQ regulatory area based on that person's highest

total legal landings of halibut in each IPHC regulatory area for any 5 years of the 7-year halibut QS base period 1984 through 1990. The sum of all halibut QS for an IFQ regulatory area will be the halibut QS pool for that area.

(ii) *Sablefish QS*. The Regional Administrator shall calculate the sablefish QS for any qualified person in each IFQ regulatory area based on that person's highest total legal landings of sablefish in each groundfish reporting area for any 5 years of the 6-year sablefish QS base period 1985 through 1990. The sum of all sablefish QS for an IFQ regulatory area will be the sablefish QS pool for that area.

(iii) *CDQ program*. Each initial QS calculation will be modified to accommodate the CDQ program prescribed at subpart C of this part.

(5) *Assignment of QS to vessel categories*—(i) *LOA*. Each qualified person's QS will be assigned to a vessel category based on the LOA of vessel(s) from which that person made fixed gear legal landings of groundfish or halibut in the most recent year of participation and the product type landed. As used in this paragraph (a)(5), "the most recent year of participation" means the most recent of 4 calendar years in which any groundfish or halibut were harvested using fixed gear, as follows: 1988, 1989, or 1990; or calendar year 1991 prior to September 26, 1991.

(ii) *Vessel categories*. QS and its associated IFQ assigned to vessel categories include:

(A) Category A QS and associated IFQ, which authorizes an IFQ permit holder to harvest and process IFQ species on a vessel of any length;

(B) Category B QS and associated IFQ, which authorizes an IFQ permit holder to harvest IFQ species on a vessel of any length;

(C) Category C QS and associated IFQ, which authorizes an IFQ permit holder to harvest IFQ species on a vessel less than or equal to 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA;

(D) Category D QS and associated IFQ, which authorizes an IFQ permit holder to harvest IFQ halibut on a vessel less than or equal to 35 ft (10.7 m) LOA, except as provided in § 679.42(a).

(iii) *QS assignment*. A qualified person's QS will be assigned:

(A) To vessel category A if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel processed any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(B) To vessel category B if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel was greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA and did not process any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(C) To each applicable vessel category in proportion to the landings of halibut or sablefish made by that person if, at any time during their most recent year of participation, that person used more than one vessel in different categories.

(iv) *Sablefish QS*. A qualified person's sablefish QS will be assigned:

(A) To vessel category C if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel was less than or equal to 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA and did not process any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(B) To the vessel category in which halibut and groundfish were landed, or vessel categories in proportion to the total fixed gear landings of halibut and groundfish, if, at any time during the most recent year of participation, that person's vessel(s) makes no landing(s) of sablefish.

(v) *Halibut QS*. A qualified person's halibut QS will be assigned:

(A) To vessel category C if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel was less than or equal to 60 ft (18.3 m), but greater than 35 ft (10.7 m), LOA and did not process any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(B) To vessel category D if, at any time during his/her most recent year of participation, that person's vessel was less than or equal to 35 ft (10.7 m) LOA and did not process any groundfish or halibut caught with fixed gear.

(C) To the vessel category in which groundfish were landed, or vessel categories in proportion to the total fixed gear landings of groundfish, if, at any time during the most recent year of participation, that person's vessel(s) makes no landing(s) of halibut.

(vi) *Both species QS*. A qualified person's QS for both species will be assigned to the vessel category in which

groundfish were landed in the most recent year of participation if, at any time during that year, that person landed halibut in one vessel category and sablefish in a different vessel category.

(6) *Application for initial QS*—(i) *Application form*. The Application period for QS ended on July 15, 1994. As of that date, the Request for QS Application form replaced the QS Application form as the means by which the Administrator, RAM, reviews and makes initial administrative determinations on requests for initial allocations of QS. A Request for QS Application must contain the following: information identifying the individual, representative of a deceased fisherman's estate, corporation, partnership, or other non-individual entity, or dissolved corporation, partnership, or other non-individual entity making the request; contact numbers; vessel identification, length overall, and purchase date; and information on any vessel leasing arrangement pertinent to the claim of eligibility.

(ii) *Application period*. An application period of no less than 180 days will be specified by notification in the FEDERAL REGISTER and other information sources that the Regional Administrator deems appropriate.

(iii) *Complete application*. Complete applications received by the Regional Administrator will be acknowledged. An incomplete application will be returned to the applicant with specific kinds of information identified that are necessary to make it complete.

(7) *Insufficient documentation*. Halibut and sablefish catch history, vessel ownership or lease data, and other information supplied by an applicant will be compared with data compiled by the Regional Administrator. If additional data presented in an application are not consistent with the data compiled by the Regional Administrator, the applicant will be notified of insufficient documentation. The applicant will have 90 days to submit corroborating documents (as specified in paragraph (a) of this section) in support of his/her application or to resubmit a revised application. All applicants will be limited to one opportunity to provide corroborating documentation or a revised ap-

plication in response to notification of insufficient documentation.

(8) *Verified data*. Uncontested data in applications will be approved by the Regional Administrator. Based on these data, the Regional Administrator will calculate each applicant's initial halibut and sablefish QS, as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, for each IFQ regulatory area, respectively, and will add each applicant's halibut and sablefish QS for an IFQ regulatory area to the respective QS pool for that area.

(9) *Unverified data*. Catch history, vessel ownership, or lease data that cannot be verified by the Regional Administrator, following the procedure described in paragraph (a)(7) of this section, will not qualify for QS. An initial determination denying QS on the grounds that claimed catch history, vessel ownership or lease data were not verified may be appealed following the procedure described in § 679.43. Quota share reflecting catch history, vessel ownership, or lease data that are contested between two or more applicants, at least one of which is likely to qualify for QS when the dispute is resolved, will be assigned to a reserve that will be considered part of the QS pool for the appropriate IFQ regulatory area. Any QS and IFQ that results from agency action resolving the dispute will be assigned to the prevailing applicant(s) pursuant to paragraphs (a)(4), (a)(5), (b), and (c) of this section. If the assigned IFQ for the 1995 fishing season becomes moot by passage of time needed to resolve the dispute, the assignment of QS and IFQ for subsequent fishing seasons will be unaffected.

(10) NMFS revokes inactive QS if the person holding inactive QS does not:

(i) Respond in writing to NMFS, within 60 days after NMFS issues a Notice of Determination of Quota Share Inactivity (Inactive QS Notice) sent to the address of record as defined at § 679.43(e) of this part, requesting that the inactive QS not be revoked. Responses must be received by NMFS no later than the date contained on the Inactive QS Notice

(ii) For purposes of paragraph (a)(10) of this section, "respond in writing" means write a statement directing NMFS to change the status of QS to

“active” and sign and date the statement or complete the form attached to the Inactive QS Notice and send by U.S. Mail, courier, hand delivery, or facsimile to the NMFS, Alaska Region as provided on the Inactive QS Notice and printed on the front side of the form. The written response must be received by NMFS no later than the date contained on the Inactive QS Notice or if sent by mail, postmarked by that date. If delivered by hand or courier, the receiving date is the date the notice is stamped received by NMFS.

(iii) For purposes of paragraph (a)(10) of this section, the term “inactive QS” means halibut QS or sablefish QS, held by a person who received an initial allocation of halibut QS or sablefish QS and has not taken any of the following actions:

(A) Transferred any halibut QS or sablefish QS pursuant to § 679.41;

(B) Transferred any halibut IFQ or sablefish IFQ pursuant to § 679.41;

(C) Landed any halibut authorized by IFQ halibut permit(s) issued to that person; or

(D) Landed any sablefish authorized by IFQ sablefish permit(s) issued to that person.

(b) *Annual allocation of IFQ.* The Regional Administrator shall assign halibut or sablefish IFQs to each person holding unrestricted QS for halibut or sablefish, respectively, up to the limits prescribed in § 679.42 (e) and (f). Each assigned IFQ will be specific to an IFQ regulatory area and vessel category, and will represent the maximum amount of halibut or sablefish that may be harvested from the specified IFQ regulatory area and by the person to whom it is assigned during the specified fishing year, unless the IFQ assignment is changed by the Regional Administrator within the fishing year because of an approved transfer or because all or part of the IFQ is sanctioned for violating rules of this part.

(c) *Calculation of annual IFQ allocation*—(1) *General.* The annual allocation of IFQ to any person (person p) in any IFQ regulatory area (area a) will be equal to the product of the TAC of halibut or sablefish by fixed gear for that area (after adjustment for purposes of the Western Alaska CDQ Program) and that person’s QS divided by the QS pool

for that area. Overages will be subtracted from a person’s IFQ pursuant to paragraph (d) of this section. Expressed algebraically, the annual IFQ allocation formula is as follows:

$$\text{IFQ}_{\text{pa}} = [(\text{fixed gear TAC}_a - \text{CDQ reserve}_a) \times (\text{QS}_{\text{pa}}/\text{QS pool}_a)] - \text{overage of IFQ}_{\text{pa}}.$$

(2) *QS amounts.* For purposes of calculating IFQs for any fishing year, the amount of a person’s QS and the amount of the QS pool for any IFQ regulatory area will be the amounts on record with the Alaska Region, NMFS, as of 1200 hours, A.l.t., on January 31 of that year.

(3) *IFQ permit.* The Regional Administrator shall issue to each QS holder, pursuant to § 679.4, an IFQ permit specifying the maximum amount of halibut and sablefish that may be harvested with fixed gear in a specified IFQ regulatory area and vessel category. Such IFQ permits will be sent to each QS holder at the address on record for that person prior to the start of the IFQ fishing season or to any IFQ holder(s) following transfers or penalties (15 CFR part 904).

(d) *Ten-percent adjustment policy.* A person’s annual IFQ account will be adjusted in the year following a determination that the person harvested or landed IFQ species in an amount is greater than the amount available in the person’s annual IFQ account and if the amount greater than the amount available does not exceed 10 percent of the amount available in the person’s annual IFQ account at the time of landing. The adjustment would be a deduction of the amount of IFQ species harvested or landed that was determined to exceed the amount available in the person’s annual IFQ account and will apply to any person to whom the affected IFQ is allocated in the year following the determination.

(e) *Underages.* Underages of up to 10 percent of a person’s total annual IFQ account for a current fishing year will be added to that person’s annual IFQ account in the year following determination of the underage. This underage adjustment to the annual IFQ allocation will be specific to IFQ species, IFQ regulatory area, and vessel category for which an IFQ is calculated,

and will apply to any person to whom the affected IFQ is allocated in the year following determination of an underage.

(f) *Harvesting privilege.* Quota shares allocated or permits issued pursuant to this part do not represent either an absolute right to the resource or any interest that is subject to the “takings” provision of the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Rather, such quota shares or permits represent only a harvesting privilege that may be revoked or amended subject to the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable law.

(g) *External research tags for halibut and sablefish.* (1) Nothing contained in this part 679 shall prohibit any person at any time from retaining and landing a Pacific halibut or sablefish that bears at the time of capture an external research tag from any state, Federal, or international agency, provided that the halibut or sablefish is one of the following:

(i) A Pacific halibut landed pursuant to § 300.62 of this title and to this part 679; or

(ii) A sablefish landed in accordance with the Tagged Groundfish Research Program, and in compliance with all sablefish requirements of this part 679.

(2) Halibut and sablefish bearing an external research tag from any state, Federal, or international agency, landed pursuant to paragraph (g)(1)(i) or (g)(1)(ii) of this section, and in accordance with § 679.5(1), shall be excluded from IFQ or CDQ deduction as follows:

(i) The fish shall not be calculated as part of a person's IFQ harvest of halibut or sablefish and shall not be debited against a person's halibut IFQ or a person's sablefish IFQ; or

(ii) The fish shall not be calculated as part of the CDQ harvest of halibut or sablefish and shall not be debited against a CDQ group's halibut CDQ or a CDQ group's sablefish CDQ.

(h) *Properly debited landing.*—(1) *Permit holder's account.* Except as provided in paragraph (g) of this section, all IFQ halibut, CDQ halibut, and IFQ sablefish catch onboard a vessel must be weighed and debited from the IFQ permit holder's account or CDQ halibut permit holder's account under which the catch was harvested.

(2) *Properly debited account.* A properly concluded sablefish/halibut IFQ landing receipt, crab IFQ landing receipt, or a manual IFQ landing report which is signed by the Registered Buyer and IFQ permit holder or IFQ hired master permit holder or CDQ hired master permit holder constitutes confirmation that the IFQ permit holder's or CDQ permit holder's account is properly debited.

(3) *Source of debit.* NMFS shall use the following sources (see paragraphs (h)(3)(i) and (ii) of this section) of information to debit a CDQ halibut, IFQ halibut, or IFQ sablefish account:

(i) *Unprocessed landing.* If offload of unprocessed IFQ halibut, CDQ halibut, or IFQ sablefish from a vessel, the scale weight (to the nearest pound) of the halibut or sablefish product actually measured at the time of offload, as required by § 679.5(e)(7)(i)(E)(6) to be included in the IFQ Landing Report.

(ii) *Processed landing.* If offload of processed IFQ halibut, CDQ halibut, or IFQ sablefish from a vessel, the scale weight (to the nearest pound) of the halibut or sablefish processed product actually measured at or before the time of offload. If the product scale weights are taken before the time of offload, then the species and actual product weight of each box or container must be visibly marked on the outside of each container to facilitate inspection by OLE or designees.

[61 FR 31230, June 19, 1996, as amended at 61 FR 35579, July 5, 1996; 61 FR 41525, Aug. 9, 1996; 61 FR 43314, Aug. 22, 1996; 62 FR 59299, Nov. 3, 1997; 66 FR 27910, May 21, 2001; 67 FR 4133, Jan. 28, 2002; 71 FR 36492, June 27, 2006; 72 FR 44809, Aug. 9, 2007; 73 FR 76166, Dec. 15, 2008; 76 FR 40633, July 11, 2011; 77 FR 29563, May 18, 2012]

§ 679.41 Transfer of quota shares and IFQ.

(a) *General.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, transfer of QS or IFQ means any transaction requiring QS, or the use thereof in the form of IFQ, to pass from one person to another, permanently or for a fixed period of time.

(2) Transactions requiring IFQ permits to be issued in the name of a hired master employed by an individual or a corporation are not transfers of QS or IFQ.